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The Relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Brand Image in the Fastfood Industry in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Brown Walter Ateke[1*], Jane Chinyere Onwujiariri[2], Doris Akunne Nnennanya[3]
1 3 College of Graduate Studies, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria
2 Beremont Nigeria Limited

Abstract

A strong brand image is an essential business asset in the modern day business environment. This is because a strong brand image provides an effective way to get the brand noticed amidst the rush and clutter in the daily media. The aim of current study was to determine the nexus between celebrity endorsement and brand image in the fastfood industry. In other to achieve the objective of this study, four research hypotheses were formulated and tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation (rho), relying on the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data for the study was collected through questionnaire, and data collected from four hundred and eighteen (418) customers of fastfood firms in Port Harcourt was used in the final analysis. The study found a positive and significant association between celebrity endorsement and all the metrics of brand image considered in the study. Importantly, the study discovered a strong and positive correlation between celebrity endorsement and brand awareness, while the relationship between celebrity endorsement and brand personality is found to be moderate. The paper therefore concluded that celebrity endorsement is a needful communication strategy for building a strong brand image, and recommends that marketers must be careful enough to ensure a good endorser-brand fit so as to raise the unique selling proposition of the firm to new heights.

Keywords: Celebrity endorsement, Brand image, Brand awareness, Brand distinction, Brand personality, Brand prestige.

1. Introduction

The fastfood industry in Nigeria is a very competitive one with very limited entry and exit barriers. The industry has witnessed a high level of professionalization and sophistication, with a proliferation of national and international brands that has triggered a robust competition where firms compete for brand recognition through aggressive marketing efforts (Ateke *et al*, 2015). Firms struggle to outperform one another through various strategies, knowing that standing out from the clutter of marketing messages directed at the consumers and winning their attention is a marked way of achieving competitive advantage (Ateke, 2013). To achieve this feat, marketing communication experts have devised many strategies; one of which is celebrity endorsement. The use of celebrities as spokespersons is an established practice in marketing communication which has gained wide usage in recent times in spite of the surging cost of hiring celebrities (Ateke, 2013).

Marketers frequently use spokespersons to deliver their marketing messages whose cardinal objectives are to inform, remind and persuade customers, change or modify their attitude towards the brand and ignite or induce purchase intentions (Melford & Nwulu, 2015; Nwulu & Ateke, 2013; Ateke, 2013; Pringle & Binet, 2005; Pornpitakpan, 2003; Solomon, 2002) To achieve these objectives, the marketing message must be deemed credible by the consumers; as the credibility of the marketing message is crucial in convincing the target audience about the claims of the company (Nwulu & Ateke, 2014). The marketing message is thus the bedrock of the firm's marketing efforts; for without the message, the great product with its excellent features and innumerable benefits to the consumer will be little known (Ateke, 2013). Employing an endorsement strategy enables marketing communicators to project a credible image in terms of expertise, persuasiveness, trustworthiness, and objectiveness (Till & Shimp, 1998).

The marketplace today is very dynamic, volatile and overly competitive; even as the customers are getting increasingly smarter, more informed, and have greater access to many channels and choices which take little time to exercise (Nwulu & Asiegbu, 2015; Ateke, 2014). Customers in present day markets can easily defect to competitors who promise better offerings at lower prices (Alrubaiee & Nahl, 2010); even as globalization of markets and the influx of new national and international brands have led to stiffer competition and the risk of reducing market shares for all players (Ateke, 2014). With a view to maintaining their hold on the market; firms undertake myriad activities and contrive and implement several strategies (Ateke & Elvis, 2013). Since customers are of significant importance, it is essential for firms to always occupy a prime place in their mind. Celebrity endorsement offers a unique and viable strategy for achieving this goal, as it creates a distinct identity for the brand in a market with a high proliferation of national and international brands.

In today's increasingly competitive and dynamic markets where the cost of acquiring new customers has been found to be exponentially greater than that of maintaining existing ones (Reichheld, 1996), firms must

continually explore ways of achieving higher customer retention rates. A strong brand image which stems from the quality of a firm's products and the strength of the firm's positioning efforts is not only capable of attracting new customers to a firm; it can also induce loyalty behaviour in the customers, since everybody like to identify with a brand with a reputable image. Through marketing communication, the firm establishes in the mind of the consumers, a distinct perception of the firm and its value offerings; and with this perception so created, the consumers attach a distinct personality to the firm and its offerings. The building of a reputable brand image in the mind of the consumers is especially enhanced through the use of endorsers or spokespersons in the firm's marketing communications; and celebrities are among the persons commonly used as endorsers or spokespersons in this regard.

Celebrities have been used to promote various kinds of products and services (Nelson *et al*, 2012). The marked rise of celebrity endorsers is not limited to a specific sector of the economy; companies using celebrity endorsement cut across all industry categories–including packaged goods, telecommunication, financial services, hospitality, automobile etc. (Okorie & Aderogba, 2011; Okorie, 2010); as celebrity endorsement has been established as one of the most popular advertising tools (Sabunwala, 2013). The current study therefore seeks to determine the connection between celebrity endorsement and brand image in the fast-food industry. The following hypotheses are formulated to guide the investigation:

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between celebrity endorsement and brand awareness.
Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between celebrity endorsement and brand distinction.
Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between celebrity endorsement and brand personality.
Ho_4: There is no significant relationship between celebrity endorsement and brand prestige.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Celebrity Endorsement

As competition to capture consumers' attention and interest for brands intensifies, marketers have developed better advertising strategies to get the consumer's attention, create interest, arouse desire and instigate purchase action (Melford & Nwulu, 2015). Engaging celebrities to serve as spokespersons for brands is one of such strategies. Celebrities are persons who are recognized by a large share of a certain group of people primarily because of the publicity associated with their lives (Silvera & Austad, 2004; Schlecht, 2003). They are persons with prominent profile and enjoy some level of public attention and influence in the society. The term is often synonymous with wealth, implied with popular appeal, prominence in a particular field and is easily recognized by the general public.

An endorsement on the other hand is a testimonial in a marketing communication which could be a written or spoken statement in favour of a product and is given by a party other than the maker of the product (Ateke, 2013). Endorsement is a medium of brand communication in which an individual or organisation acts as the brand's spokesperson and certifies the brand's claims and position by extending his/her/its personality, popularity, status in the society or expertise in a field to the brand. It is the act of giving ones public approval to someone or something; especially a recommendation of a product in a marketing communication.

Celebrity endorsement is an advertising strategy whereby companies use people of public recognition as spokespersons for their products (Melford & Nwulu, 2015). Celebrity endorsement is a common phenomenon in today's market-place where celebrities as well known personalities are gaining more importance and fan following. By definition, celebrity endorsement is a form of brand or advertising campaign that involves well-known persons using their fame to help promote a product (McCracken, 1989); while a celebrity endorser according to Friedman and Friedman (1979) in McCracken (1989) is any individual, character or organization who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good (or service) by appearing with it, or speaking in support of its claim in an advertisement.

There is a general belief among advertisers that advertising messages delivered by celebrities provide a higher degree of appeal, attention and possibly message recall than those delivered by non-celebrities (Kahle & Homer, 1985). Marketers also claim that celebrities affect the credibility of the claims made by the firm, increase the memorability of the message, and may provide a positive effect that could be generalized to the brand (Cooper, 1984). Celebrity endorsement has the ability to break through the advertising clutter, enhance message believability, increase message memorability and ignite purchase intentions (Ateke, 2013). It has thus become a trend and perceived as a winning formula for product marketing and brand building (Mukherjee, 2009; Khatri, 2006). Celebrity endorsement provides an alternative to creative advertising. Where creative advertisements tend toward logic, humour or emotion, celebrity endorsement is mainly focused on the strength of the celebrity and more often, it tend to make the celebrity speak directly to the public (Bhasin, 2010); and mostly to his fans and loyalists.

2.2 Brand Image

A brand is the name, term, sign, symbol, design or any other feature that identifies one seller's products and distinguishes it from those of other sellers (Watkins, 2006; Kotler *et al*, 1996; Doyle, 1994; Aaker, 1991) It is an identifiable entity that makes specific promises of value; and is often the most valuable asset a firm can own (Aaker, 1991). A brand is usually invented when marketing adds value to a certain product in the process of distinguishing it from other products with similar features and benefits and values (Pearson, 2005). Branding on the other hand is the expression of the essential truth or value of an organisation and its products that distinguish it from the competition (Aaker, 1996). It is communicated through features, values, attributes, etc. that clarifies what a particular brand is; and what it is not (Aaker, 1996).

Brand image is thus the consumer's perception of a brand and is measured as the brand associations held in consumers' memory (Keller, 1993); it is the reasoned or emotional perception consumers attach to specific brands (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). Brand image can also be seen as the totality of consumers' perceptions about the brand, or how they see it, which may not be the same with the brand identity (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). A brand image consists of functional and symbolic brand beliefs. It is a strong, favorable and unique brand association in recognition, which will result in positive attitude, perceived quality and positive overall effect (Keller, 2003). Basically, any specific information existing in the minds of customers with respect to a brand is relevant as an image element (Bondesson, 2012). Keller, (2003) also states that brand image has been widely accepted in literature as the perception existing in the memory of the customer. When a customer can recognize a product brand, it means that they had combined the symbolic value and the willingness to own the product as well.

Keller (2003) further states that high level of brand awareness and positive brand image will increase brand choice probability of customers, leading to increased customer loyalty and lower marketing costs. It is thus important for companies to create great and effective brand image, since a strong brand image elicits positive attitude from consumers and results to higher profit stream, either in long term or short term (Hussain, 2007). If a firm fails to provide a positive and strong brand image, it may directly or indirectly affect the consumers' decision making; as consumers may shift to competitors that offer better experience. In order to achieve goals associated with product and brand management, it is important to build a strong brand. Several metrics have been put forward in the past few decades, as measures of brand image by renowned authorities in marketing in general, and branding in particular. However, this paper limits itself to the examination of brand awareness, brand distinction, brand personality and brand prestige as measures of brand image.

2.2.1 Brand Awareness

Brand awareness describes the extent to which a brand is recognized by potential customers, and is correctly linked with a particular product. Brand awareness is the primary goal of advertising at the introduction stage of a new product in the product life cycle. Consumers buy a familiar brand because they are comfortable with it or because they assume that a brand that is familiar is probably reliable and of reasonable quality (Aaker, 1991). Brand awareness also refers to an ability to identify, recognize, or recall a brand in a certain product category (Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1991). Tangible attributes of branding, such as a brand name, logo, symbol, icon, and metaphor, facilitate consumer's awareness of a brand (Neumeier, 2006). Also, advertising and positive word-of-mouth regarding a brand may enhance brand awareness, which plays an important role in consumer decision-making (Aaker, 2007, 1996; Pitta & Katsanis, 1995).

A consumer may easily patronize one brand or the other because he/she frequently sees the brand names and logos promoted on television or billboards, and has experience with the brands (Cho, 2011). Cho (2011) Also state that a positive reputation for a brand may increase the level of awareness, and foster the consumer's interests in the brand. Brand recognition is thus important for a new brand; while brand recall is vital for a well-known brand (Aaker, 1996; Aaker, 1991). Although brand recall frequently leads to purchase decisions; disliked or hated brand could be the first recalled brand in consumers' minds, due to pessimistic perceptions of the brand formed by negative past experiences with the brand (Kim, et. al., 2003). It can thus be stated that brand awareness is the degree to which consumers remember the brand or are able to recall the brand from memory; and is measured through brand recall or brand recognition. Brand recognition reflects the ability of consumers to confirm prior exposure to a brand, or the ability of consumers to retrieve the brand from memory when given the product category, the needs fulfilled by the category, or some other type of probe as a cue (Kim *et al*, 2003).

2.2.2 Brand Distinction

Brand distinction is a marketing strategy that aims to make a brand occupy a unique position relative to competing brands, in the mind of the customers. Every firm has a value proposition that defines how its brand is different from those of other firms and why consumers should patronize it. Also, every firm has a brand, strong or weak, which must be clearly differentiated from the competition since consumers have to distinguish the

firm's brand from the competition. Brand distinction is a phenomenon that must occur whether a firm is proactive, reactive or passive about evolving a distinctive position in the minds of the consumers (Ateke & Elvis, 2013; Nwulu & Ateke, 2013). But a firm can positively influence the perception of its target market towards its brand through enlightened strategic actions.

Brand awareness is important for all brands; however, high brand awareness without an understanding of what sets the brand apart from those of the competition does the firm virtually no good. This distinction as to why a firm's brand is unique in its category is also referred to as the Unique Selling Proposition (USP); and is usually achieved through positioning. Positioning is how a firm differentiates itself in the minds of the consumer (Trout & Rivkin, 2010). It is the process by which a firm seek to create an image or identity for its product, brand or the firm itself in the minds of their target market. It involves carving a niche in the minds of the consumers in a way that a firm or its product is perceived to assist consumers to solve their problems better than those of the competing firms (Nwulu & Ateke, 2013).

Positioning may also be seen as a marketing strategy that aims to make a brand occupy a distinct position in the mind of the target consumers, as distinct from those of competing brands. A firm, its product or brand must have a unique position in order to survive in present day competitive markets, and effective brand distinction is contingent upon identifying and communicating a brand's uniqueness, differentiation and verifiable values (Nwulu & Ateke, 2013). Firms apply this strategy either by emphasizing the distinguishing features of the brand, or by creating a suitable image through marketing communication.

2.2.3 Brand Personality

Brand personality is a set of human characteristics that are attributed to a brand name (Aaker, 1997). It can also be conceived as human traits or characteristics associated with a given brand name. Common characteristics or traits represented include uniqueness, sincerity, intellectualism, competence, excitement and sophistication (BusinessDictionary, 2014). Brand personality gives consumers something with which they can relate. It is something to which the consumer can relate, and an effective brand will increase its brand equity by having a consistent set of traits (Investopedia, 2014). This is the added-value that a brand gains, aside from its functional benefits. There are five main dimensions of brand personality: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness (Aaker, 1997).

Brand personality is part of how consumers perceive the brand and how the brand differentiates itself from the competition. Accurately understanding brand personality is important to brand success (Aaker, 1997). Also, being able to measure something as important-but as intangible-as brand personality enables brand owners to ask important questions that can strengthen their competitive advantage (Edelhart, 2014). Understanding brand personality also helps select the most appropriate message and media, or more effective and suitable sponsorships or partnerships (Edelhart, 2014). Ultimately, understanding a brand personality enables the brand owner to deliver a consistent brand experience that connects with consumers and leaves a deeper and more sustainable impression (Aaker, 1997). Brand personality characteristics often suggest a brand's latent appeal, and when identified and cultivated, they can effectively guide the creative tone of communications.

Having a good grasp of how consumers perceive a brand is very important; even as consumers have shown preference for branded products with reputable image in almost every product category. While there is a plethora of reasons consumers buy the brands they do, the image of the brand cannot be overlooked (Wysong *et al*, 2012). Consumers usually buy a brand because they identify with it or because it has an image distinct from others. Marketers must therefore continually examine how consumers perceive their brand's image; and to help understand brand image perceptions, researchers have turned to the concept of brand personality within the last fifteen years (Wysong *et al*, 2012). With this approach, consumers are adjudged to think of a brand as a person by ascribing human characteristics such as honesty, wholesomeness, daringness, upper-class, toughness, ruggedness, sophistication, competence etc. to the brand (Wysong *et al*, 2012).

2.2.4 Brand Prestige

Brand prestige can be defined as high reputation of a brand achieved through the brand's success in meeting the requirements of the consumers, or effectively solving their problems. An important decision brand managers face is how to position a brand to take advantage of its distinctive appeal, differentiate it from competitors, and resonate with target consumers (Hanzee & Taghipourian, 2012). Although brands can be positioned in several ways (Ateke & Elvis, 2013; Bhasin, 2011; Trout & Rivkin, 2010; Aaker & Myers, 1987; Aaker & Shansby, 1982), a basic distinction is a prestige versus a functional brand concept (Monga & John, 2010).

Prestige is a subjective evaluative judgment about the high social status of people or inanimate objects such as brands. Research on effects has shown that evaluative judgments are often followed by emotional reactions (Bagozzi *et al*, 1999). Also, Shenkar and Yuchtman-Yaar (1997) point out that an important source of prestige

judgments is prestige by association; and that in a symbolic interactions perspective; consumers may interpret symbols associated with a brand, which represent a socially shared meaning.

Prestige brand concepts are more abstract than functional brand concepts, allowing prestige brands to accommodate a wider range of products that share few physical features (Hanzee & Taghipourian, 2012; Monga & John, 2010). These brands, because of their high prestige levels, fuel the consumer's self-concept, while brands that are simply function-oriented satisfy needs for product performance (Hanzee & Taghipourian, 2012). Another difference between prestige brands and functional brands according to these authors may be found in the breadth and depth of their product mixes. Line extensions for prestige brands can more safely rely on brand prestige consistency, and may range considerably beyond their main brands in the features they possess (Hanzee & Taghipourian, 2012). Beyond these propositions, it is clear that much work needs to be done in theory building with respect to prestige brands (Prince & Davies, 2009).

Even though the concept of prestige may mean different things to different consumers, the general assumption is that prestige brands are infrequently purchased, require a higher level of interest and strongly relate to an individual's self-concept (Hanzee & Taghipourian, 2012). A consumer's perceived prestige towards a brand is created from a multitude of interactions between the consumer and various factors within the environment, hence it is expected that consumers would have different perceptions of prestige levels for the same brands (McCrackin, 1989). Consumers develop prestige meanings for brands based upon interactions with people, object properties and hedonic values (Ergin & Akbay, 2010).

Associative learning theory details that celebrity endorsements influence brand image through a transfer of meaning (and prestige) from the endorser to the brand (Till, 1998); and communication activities establish a pattern of connectivity between the image of the celebrity and the image of the brand, as entities represent nodes in a cognitive network, whose connectivity can be modified according to experience (Till, 1998; Till *et al*, 2008). McCracken (1989) and Kambitsis *et al* (2002) explained the effectiveness of celebrity endorsers by assessing the meanings consumers associate with the endorser and eventually transfer to the brand. McCracken (1989) developed a meaning transfer model that is composed of three stages. First, the meaning associated with the celebrity moves from the endorser to the product or brand. Thus, meanings (and prestige) attributed to the celebrity become associated with the brand in the consumer's mind. Finally, in the consumption process, the brand's meaning (and prestige) is acquired by the consumer. The third stage of the model explicitly shows the importance of the consumer's role in the process of endorsing brands with famous persons.

3. Methodology

The aim of this study was to determine the extent of relationship between celebrity endorsement and brand image in the fastfood industry. The study adopted a descriptive research design and employed the use of questionnaire as the instrument of primary data collection. With the kind permission of the operators, the questionnaire was administered to the respondents in some notable fastfood restaurants in Port Harcourt, after introduction and brief explanation of the intent of the study. The validity of the instrument of the study was confirmed through expert jury opinion, consisting of members of the academia and practitioners with adequate knowledge of the subject of the study. To ascertain the internal consistency of the measurement items, the instrument was subjected to a test of reliability using the Cronbach's alpha test, and only items that made the 0.70 threshold were included in the final version of the instrument.

The population of study consisted of customers of fastfood firms in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Using the purposive sampling technique, the study collected data from four hundred and eighteen (418) customers. In responding to the questionnaire, respondents were required to tick from 1-4 on a scale, where 1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Agree; 4= Strongly Agree. The Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (rho) was used to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance in a two-tailed test, relying on SPSS.

4. Results

Table 1: Summary of Result of Test of Hypotheses

	Brand Awareness	Brand Distinction	Brand Personality	Brand Prestige
Celebrity Endorsement	**0.815****	**0.795****	**0.439****	**0.612****

Source: Research Desk (2015)

The test of Ho_1 as can be seen on Table 1 above indicates a positive relationship between celebrity endorsement and brand awareness in the fastfood industry. The test generated 0.815** in the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient, meaning that a very strong relationship exists between celebrity endorsement and brand awareness in the fastfood industry in Port Harcourt. Based on this result, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted.

The test of Ho_2 as it is indicated on Table produced a positive correlation between celebrity endorsement and brand distinction in the fastfood industry. The test result generated a correlation coefficient of 0.795**

which imply that a strong relationship exist between the variables. Hence, this study rejects the null hypothesis; and accepts the alternate hypothesis.

Table 1 also indicates a positive correlation between celebrity endorsement and brand personality in the fastfood industry. The test result generated a correlation coefficient of 0.439** which imply that a moderate relationship exist between celebrity endorsement and brand personality in the hospitality industry in Port Harcourt. Consequently, this study rejects the null hypothesis; and accepts the alternate hypothesis.

Finally, as can be seen on Table 1, the result of the test of Ho_4 indicates a positive relationship between celebrity endorsement and brand prestige in the fastfood industry. The test result generated a 0.612** score in the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient, implying that a strong relationship exists between the variables in the fastfood industry in Port Harcourt. On the basis of this result, the study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternate hypothesis.

5. Discussion of Findings

This study found a very strong and positive correlation between celebrity endorsement and brand awareness in the fastfood industry in Port Harcourt. This position is premised on the test result of Ho_1. This finding is validated by the fact that customers are more likely to recognize or recall brands that are associated with known celebrities, especially those they have a liking for. This finding also corroborates the finding of Chan *et al* (2013) and Zafar (2010) who found a similar relationship between celebrity endorsement and brand awareness in China and Sabunwala (2013) who found a similar relationship between the variables in India.

Ho_2 of this study speculated that celebrity endorsement does not have a significant impact on brand distinction. However, the test result of 0.795** obtained from the test of the hypothesis proved the falsity of that speculation. Consequent upon the test result, this study posit that a very strong and positive relationship exist between the variables. This position is shared by Sabunwala (2013), Chan *et al* (2013) and Mukherjee (2009).

In view of the score of 0.439 produced by the test of Ho_3, this investigation inferred that there is a positive relationship between celebrity endorsement and brand personality. This position agrees with that of Ogunsiji (2012) and Nelson & Aderogba (2011) who posits that celebrity endorsement enhances brand personality. In other words, the use of celebrity endorsement enforces brand personality, which helps to increase the recall value of the brand.

Following from the score of 0.612 obtained from the test of Ho_4, this study aver that there is a strong and positive relationship between celebrity endorsement and brand prestige. This averment is easily supported by the meaning transfer model of McCracken (1989) which explained that the meaning associated with the celebrity moves from the endorser to the product or brand. Thus, the prestige attributed to the celebrity become associated with the brand in the consumer's mind.

A number of previous studies (Nelson *et al*, 2012; Ogunsiji 2012; Nelson & Aderogba, 2011; Zafar, 2010) corroborate the findings of this study, as the subject of celebrity endorsement is a topic that has attracted much attention. Also, real life observation of customers and their disposition toward advertisement suggests that brands which employ celebrity endorsers often enjoy better image in the consumers' perception.

On the basis of the test results obtained, this study posits that there is a significant relationship between celebrity endorsement and brand image. This is so because consumers usually recognize brands that are endorsed by celebrities more than those that are not endorsed at all. Also, association Ahmed *et al* (2012), Till *et al* (2008), Kambitsis *et al* (2002), Till (1998) and McCracken (1989) explained the effectiveness of celebrity endorsers in enhancing brand image by assessing the meanings consumers associate with the endorser and eventually transfer to the brand. And through such transfer of meaning, consumers easily recognize a given brand, distinguish it from other brands and attach a personality and prestige to it.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study posits that there is a strong and positive correlation between celebrity endorsement and brand image in the fastfood industry in Port Harcourt. Building a strong brand image is essential in modern day business environments, being an effective way to get the brand noticed amidst the rush and clutter in the in media. According to Ateke (2013), every marketing communication aims to create awareness and arouse interest in the minds of the target audience; and in order to achieve this aim, marketers employ several strategies.

Celebrity Endorsement is one of such power tools by which advertisers try to leverage the image and identification of celebrities to promote their brands (Atkin & Block, 1983). However, customers' perception of a brand is not influenced only by the endorsement the brand gets, but mostly by the endorser-product association (Ahmed *et al*, 2012) that the consumers perceive; though good judgment may suggest that getting a celebrity endorsement is a true simple-to-implement way to maximize advertising effectiveness that yields stronger ties with viewers and ultimately, greater sales.

One of the most widely held beliefs in advertising professes that celebrity endorsement enhances persuasion and improve advertising effectiveness. Celebrity endorsement if used effectively makes the brand stand out from the advertising clutter, enhances brand awareness, facilitates brand distinction, gives personality to the brand and accords it prestige. To achieve this, the marketer needs to be really disciplined in the choice of a celebrity; since the right match between the product and the celebrity can amplify the Unique Selling Proposition of a brand to new heights. This could result to enhanced brand image and ultimately enhanced market presence. In other words, the use of celebrity endorsement helps to increase the recall value of the brand; this is why the use of celebrities in mainstream advertising is a common marketing communication strategy and practice (Ogunsiji, 2012).

7. Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of this study and the conclusion reached, the study recommends that:

1. Organisations should continue to engage celebrity endorsers in their marketing communication efforts, as this will enhance the image of their brand in the consumers' mind.
2. Celebrity endorsement should become a strategic marketing communication practice for firms that must break through the advertising clutter and stand out of the competition.
3. Marketers must be careful enough to ensure a good endorser-brand fit so as to raise the unique selling proposition of the firm to new heights. Since when used effectively, celebrity endorsement can enhance brand awareness and brand distinction, and accord the brand a personality and prestige.

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Appendix

Correlation Analysis of the Relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Brand Awareness

			Celebrity Endorsement	Brand Awareness
Spearman's rho	Celebrity Endorsement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.815**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	418	418
	Brand Awareness	Correlation Coefficient	.815**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	418	418

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation Analysis of the Relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Brand Distinction

			Celebrity Endorsement	Brand Distinction
Spearman's rho	Celebrity Endorsement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.795**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	418	418
	Brand Distinction	Correlation Coefficient	.795**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	418	418

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation Analysis of the Relationship between celebrity Endorsement and Brand Personality

			Celebrity Endorsement	Brand Personality
Spearman's rho	Celebrity Endorsement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.439**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	418	418
	Brand Personality	Correlation Coefficient	.439**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	418	418

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation Analysis of the Relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Brand Prestige

			Celebrity Endorsement	Brand Prestige
Spearman's rho	Celebrity Endorsement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.612**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	618	418
	Brand Prestige	Correlation Coefficient	.612**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	418	418

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).